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DEATH OF SECRETARY HAY.

In the death of Secretary of State John Hay there has passed from the stage of human action one of the foremost diplomats of the day. Under his administration the department which has been presided over by some of the ablest men America has produced, has had its contests with other nations and in the results which have accrued Americans have had no reason to be ashamed of the showing made by their representatives.

Much of the work which has been done under his direction has been along the line of what has been ridiculed abroad as "shirt sleeve diplomacy." It has aimed at honest dealings and at results, rather than at masterful double-dealing and expertness in the gentle art of diplomatic lying.

Not only as a high officer of the federal government, but as a pure and upright citizen will Mr. Hay's loss be felt. No one may read the delightful poems which have come from his pen without seeing behind them some of the delightful characteristics of the man. As a public official and as a unit in the great American commonwealth he has met the demands of citizenship. May his high example long remain to inspire the youth of the country.

EXPENSE OF THE PRIMARIES.

The Norfolk Landmark continues its crusade in behalf of primaries in which the expenses shall be paid out of the State treasury. In a recent review of some of the objections offered our Norfolk contemporary said: "One of our contemporaries suggests that it would not be fair to make a primary law applying to only one party. To be sure, it would not; and no advocate of the proposition advocates such unfairness. The law should apply to the two leading parties of the State, at least."

"Another contemporary fears that to remove all the financial difficulties would tempt a horde of candidates into the field. We reply that there is no reason to expect any more candidates than enter at general elections; and even if more did enter, what of it? The expense to the public would not be increased."

"The State of Minnesota has for several years had a State primary law of the kind mentioned, and it seems to be giving decided satisfaction. If Minnesota, why not Virginia?"

"The State Democratic committee, in our opinion, was entirely right in not leaving the primary to chance. If it had assigned to the local party authorities the function of collecting the funds by canvass, one-third of the counties in the State might have been unrepresented in the voting. There was nothing for the State committee to do but to make sure that a general primary would be held, and the only way of making sure was to assess the candidates."

Commenting upon the example set by the Newport News committee in reference to bearing the cost of the State primary, the Landmark has this to say:

"The Democrats of the city of Newport News have shown that any community which does not wish to take the candidates' money can avoid it. The cost of the primary at Newport News will be paid by contributions from the Democrats of that city, and the various candidates will have just

that much money refunded to them by the State committee. It should not be overlooked, however, that the admirable example set by Newport News is due largely to the fact that the city Democratic committee had a surplus on hand from the recent primary for city officers, and it was agreed that this surplus should be used to pay the city's share of the cost of the State primary. What Newport News would have done had there been no such surplus is more or less problematic."

The same action has been taken, in some counties and cities where a surplus did not exist and we believe it would be practically unanimous if the matter were properly presented to the Democratic voters of the State.

At the same time we hope to see the day when State primaries will be held under State laws and we hope that one feature of the statute will require a preliminary declaration of one's party allegiance at least six months in advance of the primary.

AS TO MR. LOOMIS.

Our hypercritical contemporary, the esteemed New York Evening Post, does not seem to be especially impressed with the elaborate statement of the Bowen-Loomis case which Hon. William H. Taft has so kindly had printed and sent out from the war department, for we find in the columns of our contemporary the following note:

"How far must a man be snatched before he is too shady for the state department? To judge by the Taft report, all mere irregularities are condonable and subject only to fatherly rebuke. No one has yet proved that Mr. Loomis has robbed a till or accepted a bribe; accordingly, Mr. Taft opines that nothing 'disqualifies him from service as minister in the diplomatic service.' Of such a view, one can only say that it fails to recognize any finer standard than that of law. It displays a certain obtuseness to finer considerations of personal honor. It is a characteristic expression of an administration that in many instances has made 'hustle' the sole criterion of public service."

In commenting upon the foregoing the Florida Times-Union holds that "Mr. Bowen is justly censured for a gross breach of good taste, but for nothing else. There is nothing in the record to throw doubt on his honesty. He was only trying to do in the wrong way what he should have done in the right way. If he had reported to the state department alone everything he reported to the state department and the public as well he would have done a praiseworthy act. But circumstances point to dishonesty in the case of Mr. Loomis, and an additional and to most people convincing circumstance is found in the fact that he is hiding the documents that would settle the question. Why hiding them? Mr. Bowen is blamed for circulating reports about Mr. Loomis in Caracas, a city 'seething with scandal' about diplomats. Mr. Loomis is only mildly censured for acting in such a way as to bring suspicion on himself and disgrace on the position he filled and the nation he represented."

A number of the most influential newspapers in the country take a similar view of the case and we have no doubt that Mr. Loomis will have a hard fight to secure confirmation for any important post to which he may be appointed by his great and good friend in the White House.

The administration has laid down the principle that high executive officers of the government should not be reappointed to third terms. In the Wallace case the doctrine that the same officers must not use their position to advance their personal interests is laid down. Unless the pension system is to be extended to that class of officials it looks as if the public service is not a very promising profession for the average young man, unless he goes ahead, like Wallace did, and shocks the administration by his remarkable lack of "patriotism."

The Ohio Democrats have adopted a good platform, but it will not appeal to the hide-bound voters of the Buckeye State. It says too much about graft and too little about those impracticable notions about which the spellbinders speak and which throw the "intelligent voter" into spasms of patriotic fervor, which cause him to forget the deeds of men who consider public office an opportunity to plunder the public.

It is remarkable how much good fellowship there is between the Civil war veterans who do not have to make up in cussing now what they lacked in service and bravery during the trying days from 1861 to 1865.

Hon. William H. Taft, despite his 360 pounds of avoirdupois seems to be having a rather difficult time holding down the lid of the Panama Canal Commission. Every now and then something escapes.

Standard Oil had better surrender. Colonel Guffey has now put on his war paint and is trailing the octopus in Pennsylvania.

ITALIAN GARDENS.

The Cedar, Cypress and the Orange Tree Mingle Their Foliage.

Perhaps nothing about Italian gardens strikes us as so wonderful as the arbor walks, or pergolas, where nature seems so absolutely docile to the hand of man. The desire is to make a dense shade—a retreat where one can shut out the hot sun—and to create this trees of a great many different sorts have been planted close together and their branches so carefully interwoven that they form a complete trellis on the two sides and above, so that cedar, cypress, orange and lemon trees mingle their foliage, all seeming to be lighted up by the pale golden globes of the fruit. With us the merest twigs of such trees would be supposed to have a stubborn individuality, rendering it impossible to train them to take the place of vines. In Italy for centuries everything has been done to create a grateful shade at noon, where one can rest or sleep and leave the world outside to the cicadas, that, when thousands of them take voice together at once, make rather a soothing sound. Along the terraces of the Villa Carlotta, on the lake of Como, these covered arbor walks lead into groves of flexes, and there until past midsummer out of the silence and coolness the nightingales sing not only all night, but all day long.

In spite of the lavish beauty of the land, the impression that remains after summer travel in Italy is of the inhabitants living very close to nature, almost subordinating her operations to their own needs. Nature is so pruned, so tended, her least effort so pressed into the service of man. The plummy cypresses, it is true, have nothing to do but stand sentinel by the belvedere terraces; so with the flexes. But the poplars are trimmed to flagpoles for the sake of fagots, and every leaf of the mulberry trees, across which the vines cling their festoons and garlands, is destined to feed the silkworms, and as soon as the maggots are ready to eat, the peasants, with huge bags, mount the trees and strip each branch of its foliage. The olive orchards that make a silver mist on the hillsides are busy perfecting their useful harvest.

Wherever a ledge of rock offers an Italian peasant makes a garden, carrying up the soil sometimes into almost inaccessible places. But there he will plant leeks, herbs, salad and beans, besides a patch of wheat, the latter not for the half loaf of bread it might make, but to furnish straw to plait hats in winter.

Nature is no niggard. The little red poppies blossom out of every cranny and clink and make a blaze of color in the most unexpected places. Oleanders have a way of tossing their tufts of rosy blossoms along the white walls, Bengal roses, clove plinks, carnations and larkspurs grow wherever they can be tended and a little rill of water directed to their use, but the summer of Italy is of great heat, and after the great gush of flowers in spring the vaulted Italian gardens remain dry intersections of graveled paths with clipped hedges, flights of steps, urns and statues. Nothing can be dearer to artistic taste, but for the real joy of gardening nothing can be equal to what the poet Gray called having "a garden of your own, where you plant and transplant and are dirty and amused."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Bird Inspired Music.

One of the most pathetic scenes remembered from the experiences of an unhappy genius is given, among other facts, about Beethoven in the "Life of Sir Herbert Stanley Oakeley." The great composer delighted in the outdoor world. He loved a tree, he once declared, with pardonable exaggeration, "better than a man."

After he had become stone deaf he visited the valley of Heiligenstadt, near Vienna, where he had stayed in other and happier days.

"Here," he said to the friend who accompanied him, "I composed my 'Pastoral Symphony,' and here the birds composed with me. Can you hear a yellow hammer?"

"No," wrote his friend on the conversation slate. "And in the symphony I only remember the nightingale, quail and cuckoo."

He believed certain phrases to have been meant for a direct imitation of certain birds, but Beethoven's method was a more poetic one. The birds had inspired him; they had "composed" with him. But they had done it by contributing unconsciously to the joyous harmony of the scene.

Beethoven in answer to his friend's suggestion took the slate and wrote upon it a passage for the flute in the "Brook Scene." That was what the yellow hammer had inspired him to do.

The "Breathing Cave."

In the western part of North Carolina, in the mountains known as the Fork range, is located the most remarkable cavern now known to exist. It is called the Breathing cave and is certainly a most wonderful natural curiosity. During the summer months a current of air comes from it which is so strong that a full grown man cannot walk against it, and in winter the rush of air is equally strong. At times a most unpleasant odor is emitted from the cave, which is supposed to be from the carcasses of dead animals which have been sucked in and killed by coming in contact with the inner walls of the inanimate, breathing monster. During the spring months, when the change from inhalation to exhalation takes place, the air is filled with pellets of hair, dry bones, small claws, etc., which are supposed to come from creatures sucked into this dry land maelstrom in times passed. Many scientists have visited and revisited the place for the purpose of studying its peculiarities, but still the mystery remains unexplained.

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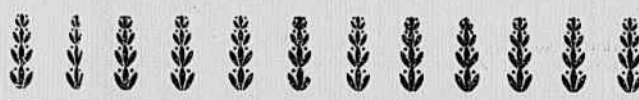
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